



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

[www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)

*"Solving Problems for the Growing World"*

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X5E-0264  
All Sources

**Position Title/Series/Grade:**  
Patent Advisor (General), GS-1221-13/14

**Promotion Potential:** GS-14

**Employment Type:** Full-time, Permanent

**Grade and Salary Range:**  
GS-13: \$81,494.00 - \$105,939.00  
GS-14: \$96,300.00 - \$125,193.00

**Location of Position:**  
Headquarters, Research, Management, and Operations,  
Office of Technology Transfer, Albany, California

**Who Can Apply:** All U.S. Citizens. You **must** include a statement in your application that you're a U.S. citizen to be considered for this position.

**Opening Date:** June 27, 2005

**Closing Date:** July 25, 2005

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

**Contact Information**

**Human Resources Specialist:**  
Catherine A. Beck, (301) 504-1366

**DC Relay Service:** (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

**Send Applications to:**  
USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
Attn: Catherine A. Beck  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5104  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104  
**Fax:** (301) 504-1535  
**E-mail:** [scirecruit@ars.usda.gov](mailto:scirecruit@ars.usda.gov)

Applications must be received, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

**Applications Will Also Be Accepted From USDA Surplus And Federal Displaced Employees In The Commuting Area.**

**\*\*Two (2) Positions Will Be Filled From This Announcement.**

**\*\*Patent Experience In Chemistry and/or Biotechnology Highly Desirable.**

**\*\*Applications Must Be Received, E-Mailed Or Faxed By The Closing Date Of The Announcement.**  
Applications Received In Government Envelopes Will Not Be Considered.

**Important Note:** Registration To Practice Before The US Patent And Trademark Office Must Be Immediately Available.

**Major Duties:**

The incumbent is responsible for the preparation and prosecution of patent applications with the aim of protecting public interest in inventions arising through research investigations of scientists. Advises researchers, administrators, and officials of collaborating institutions on matters involving domestic and foreign patent rights, policies, and procedures. Evaluates inventions to determine the patentability. Conducts investigations of infringement, validity, inventorship and ownership. Coordinates duties with other staff in the Office of Technology Transfer. Travel to other ARS research locations is required. Patents are of a scientific nature resulting from both basic and applied agricultural research principally in the areas of chemistry (e.g., general or organic chemistry) and also biology (e.g., biotechnology, biochemistry, microbiology, molecular biology, plant physiology, plant pathology, or genetics).

**Qualifications Required:** Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

**GS-13:** In addition to meeting the Basic Requirements, listed below, applicants must have one year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-12 grade level.

**GS-14:** In addition to meeting the Basic Requirements, listed below, applicants must have one year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-13 grade level.

**Time-In-Grade Restrictions apply for all candidates considered under Merit Promotion/Alternative Merit Promotion****Basic Requirements**

Professional patent work experience that involved either the examination or the preparation and prosecution of applications for US patents; or experience gained as a Patent Attorney, Patent Advisor, Patent Examiner, Patent Classifier, Patent Interference Examiner, Patent Research and Development Examiner, Patent Examiner Specialist, or Law Examiner (Patents) is acceptable for any of the professional experience as required below.

**Paragraph A**

Candidates must have successfully completed a full four year course study in an accredited college leading to a bachelor's or higher degree with a major in (a) Chemistry (e.g. general or organic chemistry, or chemical engineering), or (b) biology (e.g., biotechnology, biochemistry, microbiology, molecular biology, plant physiology, plant pathology, or genetics) OR

**Paragraph B**

Combination of education and experience which included at least four years of successful and progressive experience in any of the scientific fields stated in Paragraph A which demonstrates possession of the knowledge of the scientific principles of these fields equivalent to that of a bachelor's degree OR

**Paragraph C**

Four years of experience in any of the scientific fields stated in Paragraph A which demonstrates possession of the knowledge of scientific principles of these fields equivalent to that of a bachelor's degree.

Your education and experience will be evaluated against the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) outlined under the Specialized Experience and Selective Placement Factor listed below. A specific response to the requirements outlined under Specialized experience is highly recommended to ensure adequate consideration in the evaluation process. **A specific response to the Selective Placement Factor is required.**

**Selective Placement Factor**

(1) Ability to apply life science disciplines to basic and applied agricultural research specifically (a) chemistry (e.g. general or organic chemistry), or (b) biology (e.g. biotechnology, biochemistry, microbiology, molecular biology, plant physiology, plant pathology, or genetics).

## Specialized Experience

- (1) Ability to interpret and apply the requirements for preparing and prosecuting patent applications.
- (2) Ability to utilize and apply US Patent Law.
- (3) Ability to transpose scientific concepts into verbal expressions in order to facilitate meetings with scientists and other parties associated with the patent process.
- (4) Ability to express matters of science and patent law in writing in order to clearly define and advance the patent application process.

## Other Important Information

**Benefits Package:** A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at [www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm).

**Veteran's Preference:** For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 703-724-1850 or TDD 978-461-8404. Select General Information on the Federal Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veterans Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>.

**Relocation Expenses:** Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment & Retention Incentives & Other Special Pay, Sections 6 & 7, amended by Bulletins 03-402 and 05-412.5, go to <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/412-05.htm#H10>, or [http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing\\_recruit/reloweb.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm).

**Financial Disclosure Requirement:** Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. If hired for this position, you will be required to submit a financial disclosure report within 30 days of the effective date of your appointment and annually thereafter.

**False statements:** If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

**Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):** If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

**USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:** USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well-qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. "Well-qualified" means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:

- (1) a copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- (2) evidence of full performance level of current position;
- (3) a copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- (4) a copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.

**Selective Service System:** Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** Reasonable accommodation may be provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding

reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on (202) 720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on (202) 855-1234 (TDD). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

**Civil Rights Policy Statement:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD).

## Application Package Checklist

**If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation.**

- ☐ Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications. To obtain a copy of the OF-612 go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp>.

**The following information is required of all applicants:**

- ☐ Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position
- ☐ Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day, evening, or cellular phone numbers (with area code)
- ☐ Social security number
- ☐ Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- ☐ Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). If you are claiming Veteran's Preference go to <http://www.opm.gov/employ/veterans/html/vetguide.asp> for more information.
- ☐ SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form. If you are claiming 10-point Veteran's Preference go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain the form.
- ☐ Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:
  - \_\_\_ Job title
  - \_\_\_ Series/grade (if Federal employment)
  - \_\_\_ Duties and accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Employer's name and address
  - \_\_\_ Supervisor's name and contact information
  - \_\_\_ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month & year)
  - \_\_\_ Number of hours worked per week
  - \_\_\_ Salary
  - \_\_\_ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- ☐ Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ Certificates/licenses (current)
  - \_\_\_ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable (usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)
- ☐ Copy of college transcripts if you are qualifying all or in part on the basis of education. If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look for "Other Education" for information governing acceptability of this type of education.
- ☐ Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status if

you are a current or previous federal employee.

- Copy of most recent performance appraisal if you are a current federal employee.
- Second copy of application package if the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures.
- Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. If you have questions about your eligibility for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and look for the subject heading, “Category”.
- Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee. See pertinent section under “Other Important Information” below.
- Self-certification of typing speed if required as a basic qualification for the position.
- While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience and/or Selective Placement Factor(s)) for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications. For an explanation of KSAs, go to <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/whatsahtml> .

If this is your first time applying for a federal job or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.